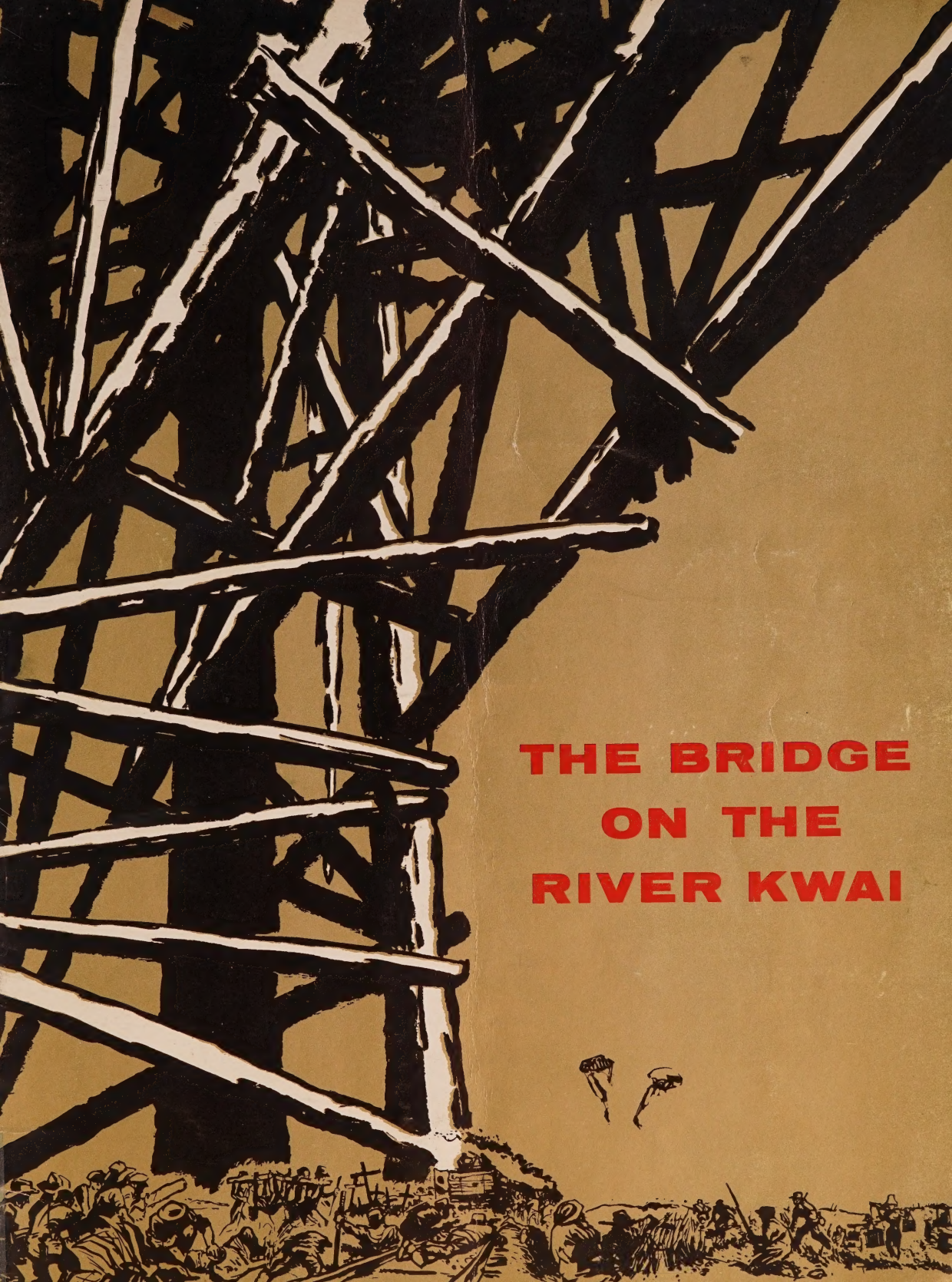
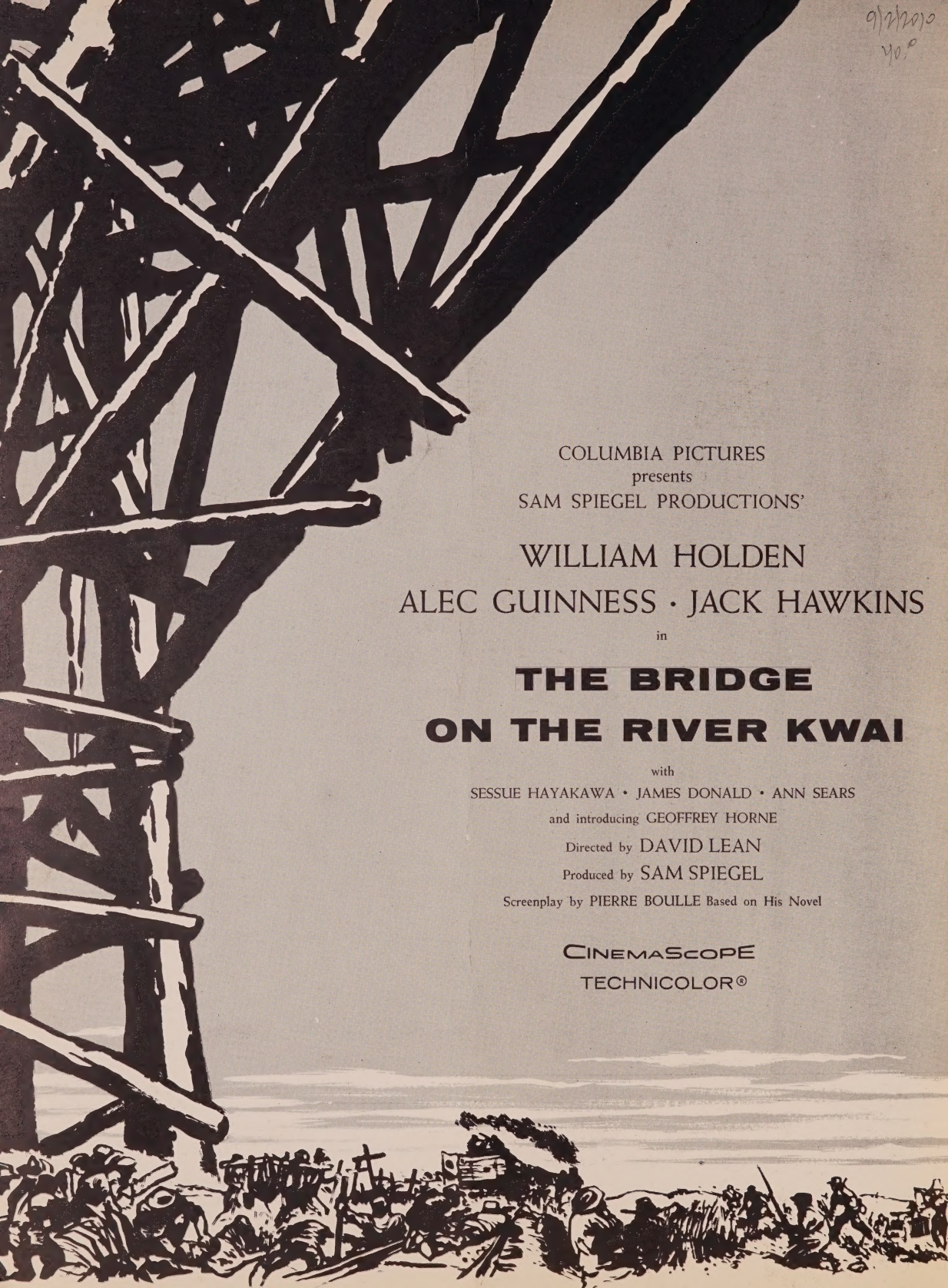

THE BRIDGE
ON THE
RIVER KWAI



COLUMBIA PICTURES
presents
SAM SPIEGEL PRODUCTIONS'

WILLIAM HOLDEN
ALEC GUINNESS · JACK HAWKINS
in

THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI

with
SESSUE HAYAKAWA • JAMES DONALD • ANN SEARS
and introducing GEOFFREY HORNE
Directed by DAVID LEAN
Produced by SAM SPIEGEL
Screenplay by PIERRE BOULLE Based on His Novel

CINEMASCOPE
TECHNICOLOR®

William Holden, center, Alec Guinness, left, and Jack Hawkins.

THE BUILDING OF THE BRIDGE

The headman of a village in Ceylon surveyed the huge, awesome new bridge that had finally been completed in the rugged jungle. The people of his village had helped build it. Fearing evil, the village's devil dancers had performed ceremonial rites on it, priests had murmured incantations, coconuts had been broken on it, limes squeezed on it, drums beaten, and streamers of betel leaves hung — all to drive the devils away from it. "Now," the headman told Hollywood producer Sam Spiegel, for whom the bridge was built, "the spirits will preserve your bridge for all time."

There was an irony in his words beyond the headman's comprehension. How was he to understand that Spiegel and a large, expert crew had dedicated themselves wholly to blowing up this bridge — stupendously, magnificently—for the climax of a new motion picture, "The Bridge on the River Kwai?"

All the labor of eight months — cutting down 1,500 giant trees in the jungle, shaping them into pillars, loading them onto the backs of forty-eight elephants to be dragged to the building site, piledriving them into the ground to create a structure larger than any in Ceylon (425 feet long and 90 feet high) at a cost of over $250,000—was to go, one week after the headman spoke, to providing one thirty-second scene in which 1,000 tons of dynamite would destroy the bridge at the precise moment when a railroad engine pulling six cars was crossing it.

Even the railroad train was carefully arranged for. Producer Spiegel had purchased it from the Ceylon Government, which had previously bought it from an Indian maharajah. When Spiegel obtained the train, it had just been retired after sixty-five years of service. Spiegel refurbished it completely, then laid one mile of railway track to carry the train to the bridge. There, experts from the Imperial Chemical Industries, specially flown in from England, carefully and properly blew the bridge and the train into smithereens, while six CinemaScope and Technicolor cameras set their sights on the spot. This was for real. It had to go right: there could be no retakes.

The explosion could have been shot with a miniature bridge and a miniature train, in trick photography, in the comfort of a Hollywood studio, with far less cost and far less sweat. It was done 10,000 miles from Hollywood in the Equatorial heat of Ceylon to achieve what producer Spiegel calls "the authority of authenticity." "Authenticity," he said recently, "is necessary to convey the entire emotional experience of a story. To simulate the experience in a Hollywood studio is possible, but it would not evoke the same emotion in an audience as the real thing."

In the past the quest for authenticity has led Spiegel to Africa for his production of "The African Queen," to the New York waterfront for his Academy-Award winning "On the Waterfront." During the last decade he has probably been in Hollywood less than any Hollywood producer in the business. "Where is your home?" he was recently asked. "In a valise," he answered. In 1956 the valise went to Ceylon, 10,000 miles from Hollywood, for "The Bridge on the River Kwai."

The impulse to film this story first came to Spiegel just three years ago — late fall, 1954. He was in Europe to open "On the Waterfront" there. In Paris, en route to London, his curiosity was piqued by reviews he read of a novel, "The Bridge on the River Kwai," by Frenchman Pierre Boulle. Spiegel picked up a copy, started reading it in Paris, finished it shortly after in London. The novel was based on an actual incident in World War II when the Japanese, using prisoners of war as slave labor, were building a railway to go from Singapore through Malaya into Siam and Burma. The railway earned the grim name "Death Railway" — among British prisoners of war alone, 100,000 died in the course of its construction.

Jungle commandos learn the Kwai bridge is almost built.

No sooner had Spiegel finished the novel than he flew back to Paris and swiftly secured the screen rights from a slightly startled author and his publisher. He also signed Boulle to work on the screenplay. From that time to the film's opening, three full years elapsed. During them Spiegel flew around the world four times in the painstaking process of achieving the ideal — in casting, in setting, in direction, in photography. London, New York, Tokyo, Bangkok, Colombo—these were only a few of the places to which he went on his mission.

The characters in the story were American, British, Japanese, Siamese. Newspaper clippings over the years reveal that Spiegel considered and talked to some of the most renowned players of this era for roles—Cary Grant, Gary Cooper, Alec Guinness, Laurence Olivier, William Holden, James Mason, Robert Donat, Charles Laughton, Jack Hawkins. The four he finally signed to carry the major action of the story were Holden, Guinness, Hawkins and, in a surprise move, an unknown 23-year-old New York stage actor, Geoffrey Horne.

For the most part, their names on contracts were not easily come by. Each of the three stars has been in tremendous demand in recent years; each had many commitments and many more offers. In fact, though Spiegel began his search for actors early in 1955, he did not secure Holden and Guinness until the fall of 1956, one year and a half later. By then the time element was growing dangerous. Both men were needed to start work in Ceylon only a few weeks after Spiegel signed them. If he had not signed them—and they had not arrived—an entire crew in Ceylon would have been involved in a costly delay. Production would have shut down.

Jack Hawkins was the first principal signed. He was engaged for Warden, a British commando leading a small, brave group into the Japanese-held jungle to help cripple the Japanese war effort by blowing up the bridge over the river Kwai. In late September, 1956, Alec Guinness was persuaded by Spiegel that, though the world knew him primarily as a comedian through a dozen films from "Kind Hearts and Coronets" and "The Lavender Hill Mob" through "The Man in the White Suit" and "The Ladykillers," moviegoers would accept him as the rigid, austere and honorable Colonel Nicholson. It is Nicholson who, a prisoner

of the Japanese, chooses to lead his men in building the bridge over the river Kwai for the Japanese, to prove that they, the prisoners, are better men than their captors.

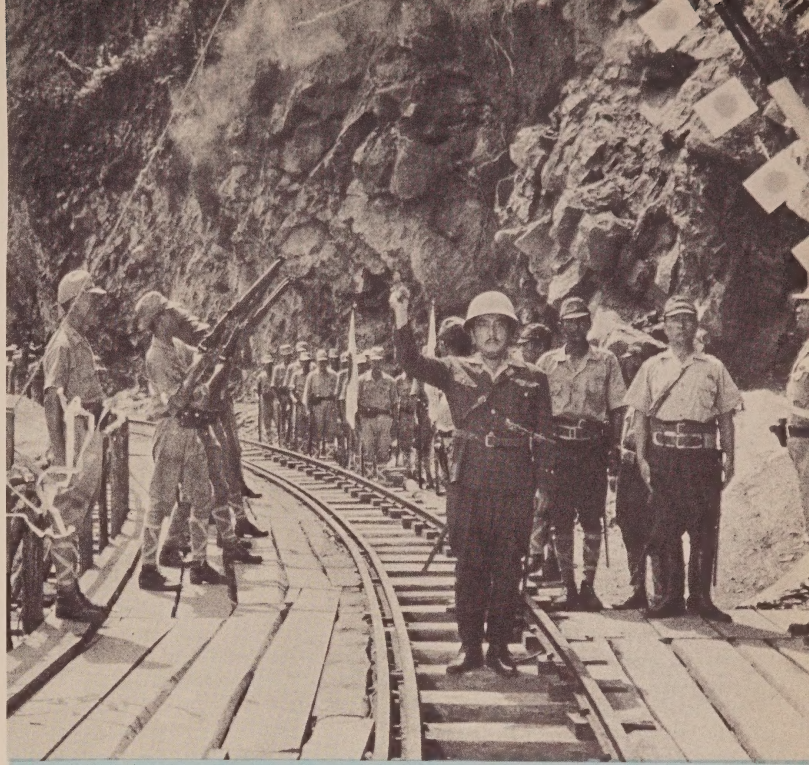
Guinness had told Spiegel several times he would not take the role. Spiegel flew to London for a final try while Guinness was working there on the stage in the farcical "Hotel Paradiso." Spiegel invited Guinness to dinner after the performance. Guinness said it was useless but accepted. It is the mark of Spiegel's eloquence that, by time dessert was finished, Guinness had said yes.

After signing Guinness—as well as James Donald, remembered as Vincent van Gogh's brother in "Lust for Life," to portray a British doctor in the prison camp—Spiegel returned to Ceylon. He observed the progress of the crew that had been building the bridge for nearly eight months, checked over the final shooting script, and conferred with director David Lean, whom he had engaged for "The Bridge on the River Kwai" with fond recollections of such varied and brilliant Lean jobs as "In Which We Serve," "Great Expectations" (Alec Guinness' first movie role), "Brief Encounter," "Breaking Through the Sound Barrier" and "Summertime."

The bridge was completed; pre-production shooting was scheduled to start October 1. Armed with copies of the final script, Spiegel left Ceylon, flying east this time. In Tokyo he hired Sessue Hayakawa, remembered by many as a villain in Hollywood's silent movie era, for the chief Japanese role, the head of the prison camp where Guinness and his men are held.

Next stop for Spiegel: Hollywood. There he left copies of the script with both William Holden and Cary Grant. The very next morning Holden called Spiegel to say he would do the movie. Grant subsequently expressed his regret that he did not finish reading the script as quickly as Holden. Holden, Hollywood's No. One boxoffice star according to a poll of exhibitors, was cast in the only important American role in "The Bridge on the River Kwai"—a Navy man who escapes from the prison camp early in the movie to return later with a British commando unit bent on demolishing the bridge.

There was still the task of finding a young actor to be the commando who goes along with Holden and Hawkins on the raid against the bridge, though he is deeply sensitive and afraid to kill. Spiegel had interviewed nearly one hundred youths without finding his man. Arriving in New York from Hollywood, Spiegel went into a projection room at the offices of Columbia Pictures, which releases his films, to look at "The



The Japanese formally take over the British-built bridge on the Kwai.

Leeches are no hazard to William Holden's mission: "Destroy the bridge!"

Strange One," a drama he had produced from Calder Willingham's novel, "End as a Man." Here, in the small part of a military college cadet who is beaten and disgraced, Spiegel saw Geoffrey Horne and was captured by his expressive performing. In a movie he had produced himself, a surprised Spiegel had found his shy commando. Not long after, Horne was on his way to Ceylon. He is now, by the way, under long-term contract to Spiegel and recently made "Bonjour Tristesse" in France under loanout to Otto Preminger.

Later, in Bangkok, Spiegel filled five important supporting roles—that of a village headman and four native girls who help Holden, Hawkins and Horne on their trek to the bridge. The casting of the headman had a remarkably authentic quality. For just as he helps the Allied soldiers in the movie, so M. R. Bongrebrahma Chakrabandhu actually helped fliers in World War II. An underground hero, he saved many men from the Japanese, even while pretending to serve the Japanese as superintendent of a prison camp. The fliers whom he guided back to Allied lines dubbed him affectionately "Colonel Broome." Now head of the advertising department of the Shell Oil Company in Bangkok, he was granted a leave of absence to be the sympathetic Yai of the movie. For the four girls Spiegel found four of Thailand's leading film actresses — Vilaiwan Seeboonreaung, Ngamta Suphaphongs, Javanart Punynchoti and Kannikar Dowklee.

The fifth feminine role—that of an attractive English nurse with whom Holden enjoys a brief romance after his escape from the prison camp, was filled by blonde-23-year-old Ann Sears, older sister of Heather Sears, who enacts the title role in "The Story of Esther Costello." Ann's scenes were not scheduled until the very end of shooting in Ceylon. Just before she left London, she looked about for someone who could tell her what life in Ceylon was like and how she could best prepare for her stay there. A friend said he knew just where she ought to go for information. He took her, to her astonishment, to see Alec Guinness. Guinness was already back in London, having finished all his scenes for "Kwai" before any of hers were put before the cameras.

Casting was only one of the large-scale problems Spiegel had to solve in bringing "The Bridge on the River Kwai" to fulfillment on the screen. Almost equally important was the locale. Where to shoot the story? What spot in those far-off jungles of Malaya or Siam or Burma, territory of the Death Railway, was the least difficult when it came to bringing in crew, cast, cameras, equipment, generators, actors, dynamite? Spiegel, director Lean and Jack Hildyard, the top cameraman who had been with Lean on three earlier films, traveled thousands of miles, looking.

The Siam-Burma border was found to be "highly inaccessible." "There were no roads," Spiegel said recently, "no ways to carry in or maneuver a cast of several hundred actors, as well as a crew. The river Kwai actually runs there but it was disappointingly small.

"In Malaya we found a very exciting river but it flowed in an area of steady guerrilla warfare. Two armored trucks were assigned to protect us while we were there. But one truck was captured by guerrillas and half the men in it were killed."

Ultimately Spiegel and Lean chose to make "The Bridge on the River Kwai" in a place resembling the Death Railway country —Ceylon, an island at the southern tip of India. Smaller than California, Ceylon contains 8,000,000 residents of English, Dutch, Portuguese and Indian origin. "Ceylon," as Spiegel puts it, "has the most beautiful scenery in the world, and the best climatic, working and health conditions imperative to a vast undertaking. It is a tropical island with the maximum assets and the minimum liabilities."

On the island Spiegel found many residents willing to be extras — planters, businessmen, jewelers who could be British soldiers in the prison camp with Guinness. Merchant seamen in the Ceylonese port of Colombo also joined the company. In all, thirty-seven nationalities were represented in the cast. Some of these men had actually been in service in the China-Burma-India theatre in World War II.

Behind the scenes, the village folk of Kitulgala and other natives built the bridge supervised by one of Ceylon's engineering firms. Although, in the movie, the prison camp appears to be a few yards away from the bridge, it was in fact located some miles away. For Lean and Spiegel found an abandoned stone quarry near the village of Mahara that had the right grim, dry, scorched look about it and there they chose to shoot the prison camp scenes. A perfectionist, Lean traveled all over the island seeking other appropriate locales. For one sunset scene he went 150 miles, for another brief moment on the screen 50 miles.

Spiegel secured the cooperation of the Ceylonese Government, which provided some of its military units as extras, helped transport equipment and even put some soldiers to work helping to build the bridge as part of their training maneuvers. The R.A.F. loaned the company paratroopers for scenes involving leaps from planes, and L. E. M. Perowne, a British major-general who had

WILLIAM HOLDEN

"A map of the United States," a friend called William Holden's face not long ago. The friend was attempting to explain the appeal that has made Holden Hollywood's Number One attraction at the boxoffice. "Bill isn't exotic the way Valentino was, he isn't as sexy as the young Gable, he isn't as tall and two-fisted as John Wayne or as fascinatingly neurotic as Marlon Brando. He comes through merely as a very decent, average American guy. And the average American guy can recognize himself in Holden. And the average American woman can feel very warmly toward him, indeed."

Whatever the nature of his appeal, Holden is inclined to take a very practical view of it. "The only thing I have to sell is myself," he says, "I'm glad that business is so good."

Holden is inclined to attribute his championship to a burst of hit movies he has been in in recent years — "Sunset Boulevard," "Born Yesterday," "Stalag 17," which brought him an Oscar in 1953, "The Moon Is Blue," "Executive Suite," "Sabrina," "The Country Girl" and "Picnic." Through them all he has shown not merely increasing acting talent but rare business acumen. For "The Bridge on the River Kwai," a Columbia release, he will receive not merely a "handsome" guarantee but also ten percent of the gross. The film will gross many millions.

Sensible as businessman Holden may be, actor Holden inclines toward risks. At 39, he still does all his own stunts in movies. In "The Bridge on the River Kwai," Holden portrays an American soldier who escapes from a Japanese prison camp and later returns to it with British commandos to blow up a bridge which is a vital link in the "Death Railway." For a climactic scene Holden had to swim the treacherous rapids of the movie's river Kwai, carrying bulky and heavy material for the explosion. He refused a double and came through the swim without injury, though 23-year-old Geoffrey Horne, acting his commando companion, suffered severe lacerations on both legs in the same action.

Holden's first film was, of course, "Golden Boy" in 1939. At 21, a complete unknown, he was signed for the title role, to co-star with Barbara Stanwyck.

In the years since 1939, Holden has led what many in Hollywood regard as an exemplary life. Married to former actress Brenda Marshall for seventeen years, he has helped raise two sons as well as Miss Marshall's daughter by a previous marriage. "This is a movie star?" one producer inquired sardonically. "He goes to P.T.A. meetings!"

Immersed in his career, which now seems at its peak, Holden has only untroubled fantasies about the future. "In ten years," he said recently, "I'd like to be sitting around on my duff — maybe doing some archaeology or working with some geodetic survey team out in the open. However, you never know. I could still be in the movies — playing a graying elevator operator."

been a commando in World War II in the Far East, acted as technical adviser on British military matters in the film.

The Japanese Government also aided the film, providing a technical assistant to advise on the war camp scenes. Spiegel had submitted a script to the Japanese Government for its approval and had convinced officials that the movie was not intended as a bitter, hate-inciting document against the Japanese but rather as a reflection of the general folly and waste of war. The final words in "The Bridge on the River Kwai" are spoken by the British doctor who gazes upon the havoc and death after the bridge's destruction. "Madness," he cries. "Madness."

Lean and his crew spent nearly a year in Ceylon. The building of the bridge was begun in early spring, 1956, and completed at the end of September. After the start of preproduction shooting on October 1, 1956, shooting involving the stars of the story began in November. Guinness arrived in Ceylon in November and Holden in late December. The actual shooting took nearly eight months, ending last May. Guinness, the man who, in the movie, devotes himself with virtually religious fervor to building the bridge tall and strong and beautiful, never had to suffer the anguish of seeing it blown up. All his scenes were shot before the explosion and he departed for London and his next acting project.

The bridge was not only higher than any building in Ceylon, but, producer Spiegel asserted, it was also the largest set ever built for a movie, surpassing even the Gates of Tanis, which Cecil B. DeMille erected in Egypt for "The Ten Commandments." The design for the bridge had also the virtue of authenticity. During the two years of research Lean and his company put into the movie, a man came to them with a faded scrap of rice paper which had been smuggled out of Burma during the war. On the paper were the details and a sketch of a bridge on the Death Railway to be passed along to commandos to help them seek out and blow up the bridge. From this sketch the bridge in the movie was designed.

In their research, Lean and his staff also interviewed hundred of ex-prisoners of war who worked on the Death Railway. Their accounts of their experiences were often incorporated into the screenplay.

Time-consuming as all this effort was, producer Spiegel did nothing to discourage it. Although the cost of the movie finally soared to $3,000,000, Spiegel steadfastly maintained he wanted "The Bridge on the River Kwai" "good, not fast." And at Kitulgala, site of the bridge, he built an unusually luxurious camp to house the company. "Anybody can suffer hardships in jungles," said Spiegel — as he knew well from his experiences making "The African Queen." "This time we will go first class." The grateful company named the camp "GLENSPIEGEL." There, every other night, Spiegel screened movies and invited in native children, fresh scrubbed and in their best sarongs and saris, to see the first films in their lives.

But it is doubtful that seeing adventures on films equalled the adventure of having a movie troupe right in their midst. Indeed, for the troupe itself, "The Bridge on the River Kwai" was an adventure and one that was experienced not without hardships, and even tragedy. Assistant director John Kerrison was killed in an auto accident on one of the crude roads of Ceylon. A make-up man was badly injured in the same accident. The rough roads were also responsible for injuries to a camera bearer traveling by motorcycle. Many of the extras, standing at attention for scenes in the prison camp, were felled by the heat and even suffered sunstroke. A stunt man, swimming the rapids of the river, barely escaped drowning in the treacherous currents; two men who tried to save him also had to be pulled out. Insisting on swimming the same rapids rather than letting stunt men do it for them, William Holden and Geoffrey Horne did a dangerous scene for the movie successfully. But Horne came out of it with severe lacerations on both legs.

One night a truck carrying gasoline mysteriously caught fire a few yards from the bridge, which had been loaded with dynamite for the climactic scene of the movie. The driver jumped from the blazing vehicle which headed down a hill toward the bridge. If it exploded on the bridge, all the months spent in building the bridge would have gone up in smoke. Ceylonese army units stationed at the site to guard the bridge against sabotage risked their lives to head the truck off and turn it down a steep precipice. It finally landed in the river where it exploded at a safe distance from the bridge.

Other problems, less frightening but still calculated to disturb the efficiency of a movie troupe at work, occurred during the work on "The Bridge on the River Kwai." Even an event as remote as the seizure of the Suez Canal by Premier Nasser of Egypt in the summer of 1956 had its impact. Equipment that was to be shipped to Ceylon through the canal had to be sent instead by specially chartered planes.

In Ceylon there was no way of processing the day's rushes. These had to be flown to London, processed there and then flown back to Ceylon before producer Spiegel and direc-

ALEC GUINNESS

John Barrymore was the Great Profile. Clark Gable is the King, Bob Hope the ski nose, Victor Mature the gorgeous hunk of man. Each film idol through the years has caught the public eye and held it by force of personality or physique, by some quality unique and distinctive. What is distinctive about Alec Guinness' appearance as a movie star is that he is—undistinctive.

"Alec Guinness has no face," the British critic, Kenneth Tynan, once wrote. "You notice it—or rather, fail to notice it—as soon as he enters a room. Jeeves-fashion, he shimmers in and is amongst you: a slight man, with deprecating, sloped shoulders which he shrugs constantly. And above the shoulders—'A blank, my lord.' By staring hard, you may assure yourself that he has eyes."

It is this very blankness which is Guinness' fortune. For on the blank face during the last decade he has been able to paint an astonishing variety of faces. How much easier for Guinness to become somebody else than, say, Clark Gable who is so vividly and indelibly Gable that it is almost impossible for him to portray another man. This facelessness enabled Guinness to become eight different people—one of them a women—in his memorable "Kind Hearts and Coronets."

Born in 1914, he knew by the time he was seven that he would some day be an actor. When he was 11, he asked to appear in a school play. The headmaster replied, "You wouldn't be any good, Guinness," and turned him down.

Determined to prove his detractors wrong, Guinness nearly starved while seeking an opportunity to act. He lived in an attic, rationed himself to one meal a day — generally baked beans on toast and sometimes less — and saved his only pair of shoes for occasions when they were absolutely necessary.

The rest of the time, he literally walked barefoot, shoes in hand — even through the streets of London. Finally small roles began to come his way in the theatre. His stage work in his own adaptation of "Great Expectations" led to David Lean's signing him for the film.

In the years before his recent reunion with Lean in Ceylon for "The Bridge on the River Kwai," there have been triumphs for Guinness in such comedies as "Kind Hearts and Coronets," "The Lavender Hill Mob," "The Man in the White Suit," "The Captain's Paradise" and "The Ladykillers." In his only Hollywood movie, "The Swan," Guinness not merely acted opposite Grace Kelly but married the girl.

Of his success, Guinness says simply, "It's practically all due to lack of good and plenty of disappointments. They can be real incentives."

But friends consider his modesty excessive, just as the press regards his passion for privacy, his refusal to talk about his marriage or home life, as quite out of key for a screen star.

His personal life is his own; he will be known to the world only as an actor. "He is a master," said a friend of Guinness, the actor and the man, "but a master of anonymity."

Here is "The Bridge on the River Kwai," built in the heart of the jungle of native wood and man's ambition.

British prisoners of war commanded by Alec Guinness get their first look at the "death railway" camp.

Jungle commandos William Holden, Jack Hawkins and Geoffrey Horne happily eye the bridge they plan to smash.

Scenes from THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI

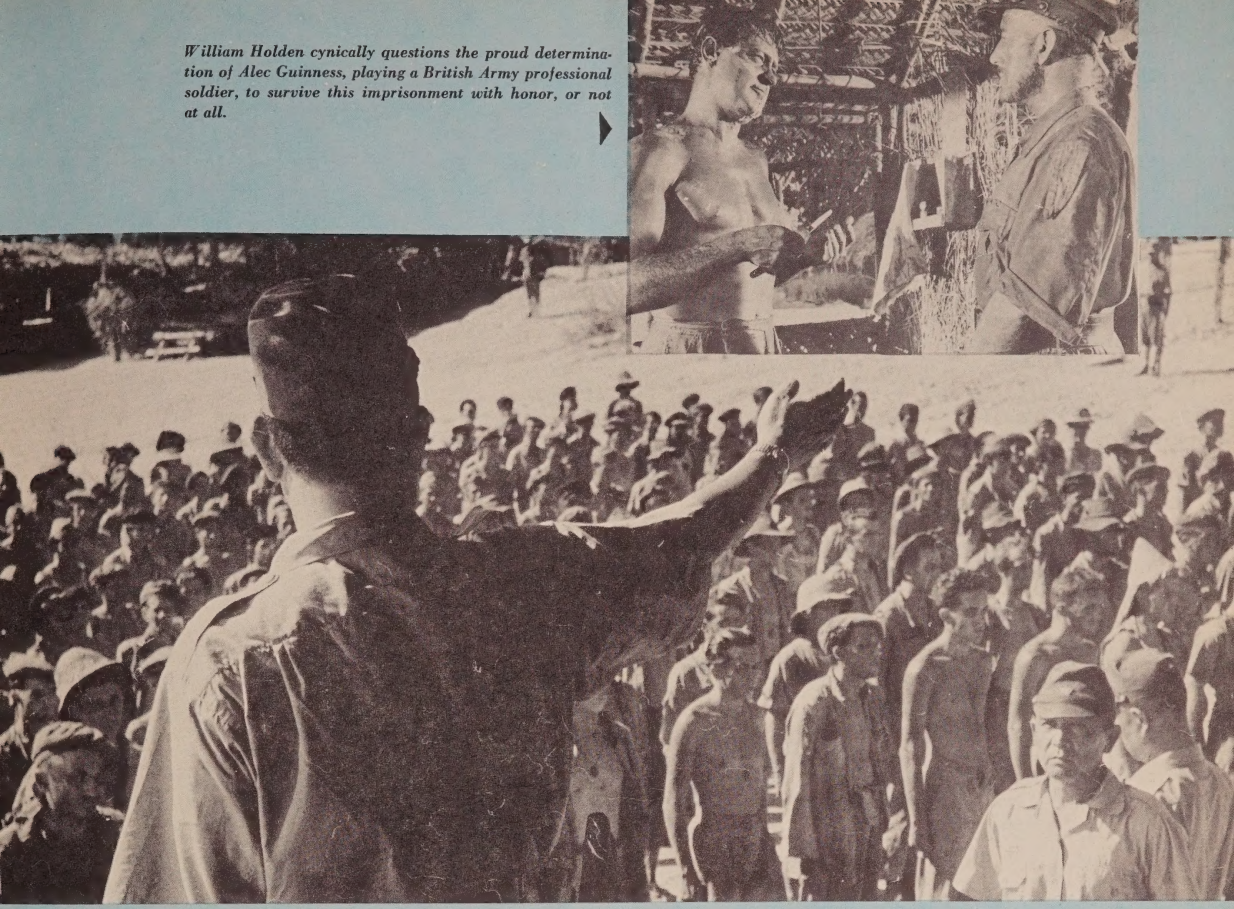
Colonels, one ruthless, one proud, meet face to face. They are Alec Guinness, left, and Sessue Hayakawa.

"Be happy in your work," Japanese prison camp commander Sessue Hayakawa tells the captured British soldiers who will build "The Bridge on the River Kwai."

Construction of the bridge is well behind schedule and the prison camp commander is forced to release Alec Guinness and his officers. Guinness again assumes command of his men; he goes further, he takes charge of the bridge itself.

Australian nurse Ann Sears teaches U. S. seaman William Holden that allies can be more than friendly.

William Holden cynically questions the proud determination of Alec Guinness, playing a British Army professional soldier, to survive this imprisonment with honor, or not at all.



The British p.o.w.'s answer with casual sabotage the Japanese commander's adjuration to "be happy in your work," and await the day when their officers will be released from the Japanese torture chambers.

Because only death is certain in the prison camp, William Holden makes a desperate escape try. He faces thirst, heat and hunger but finally makes his way down the Kwai to the sea.

Alec Guinness makes his final inspection before turning his work over to the Japanese. He proudly examines the plaque he has posted.

tor Lean could look them over and decide if any retakes were indicated.

Spiegel had to build special swamps for the movie. Though there are swamps in Ceylon, they were regarded as too treacherous for Holden, Hawkins, Horne and the four Siamese actresses to wade through. Leeches assaulted the actors relentlessly and had to be dealt with swiftly.

One scene was shot during an afternoon when the river was green. The next morning the river was yellow, having been filled with mud and silt as the result of an overnight storm. Green dye was poured into the water and the shooting went on. Rains seriously held up production at a season when residents of Ceylon said the island was always dry in past years.

Spiegel had dammed the river to control the water level. But a scene that required the most shallow level possible was delayed for eleven days — nor could any other scene be shot during this time — when the heavy rains lifted the water level over eight feet.

One problem had a faintly comic aspect. The crescent moon, as viewed in Ceylon, rides the sky like a gondola instead of standing on its tip, as it appears to do for northern viewers. It therefore had to be photographed with the camera turned sideways to make it look proper to audiences in the United States and England.

Finally, after months of precise, careful planning, there came the climax of the shooting of "The Bridge on the River Kwai"— the blowing up of the bridge. It was set for March 11, 1957. The arrangements for six cameras to shoot the explosion at close range without being damaged were completed. It was arranged too that the cameramen would leave their cameras a few moments before the explosion and proceed to places of safety. These places had been wired so that the cameramen could press a button which would tell producer Spiegel in a central control dugout that they were all right. He could then give the signal to blow up the bridge.

A human error nearly cost Spiegel all the months of effort and expense. In his excitement, one cameraman forgot to press his button to give Spiegel the signal that he was all right. In mounting consternation, Spiegel waited; all the other cameramen had signaled. The train that was to be destroyed along with the bridge was approaching the bridge. What was Spiegel to do? This was the moment for the biggest scene in the movie but if one cameraman had not reached his place of safety, he might still be close enough to the bridge to be hurt, even killed. Spiegel did not give the signal for the explosion; the train rode across the bridge and over the few feet of track extending beyond the bridge and ploughed off the rails.

The company had to work all day and night repairing the damage. Elephants were used to get the train on the track again and back to its starting point. The next morning the explosion took place; no human error interfered this time. Spiegel obtained a police escort to fly the film of the explosion to the airport at Colombo, fifty-six miles away. The footage was flown to London on three separate planes—to make sure that *some* of it would reach London safely.

At Kitulgala, after the bridge had fallen in ruins, the souvenir hunters swarmed over the wreckage. Some took undamaged timber for practical purposes, like building fences and sheds. Parts of the train were gathered by junk men for scrap metal. The torrential river swept away a good deal of what remained. As for the natives, it is reported that many still go to the site of the bridge and gaze at it. A strange year of adventure has gone out of their lives. They look at the scene and still cannot comprehend why anyone would want to build a bridge and blow it up, carve a road through a mountainside and then abandon it. The headman of the village, who predicted long life for the bridge, still presides over his village's life and activities. No reporter has asked him to comment on the explosion.

★

"On rare occasions The Theatre Guild comes upon a cinema masterpiece so intelligently made, so skillfully enacted, so rich in entertainment that we endorse it. It is a privilege to bring "The Bridge on the River Kwai" to the special attention of our subscribers."

Lawrence Langner
Theresa Helburn
Armina Marshall
THE THEATRE GUILD

★

JACK HAWKINS

In 1954, after more than thirty years as an actor, Jack Hawkins was at last admitted to Great Britain's "Who's Who." That year another newcomer to the book was Georgi Malenkov, successor to Joseph Stalin as ruler of the 200,000,000 people of the Soviet Union. It is a sign of the importance Hawkins has come to assume in the world that "Who's Who" devoted eighteen lines to him, two more than it thought necessary for Malenkov.

Hawkins, who started acting in 1923 but did not attain star status until "The Cruel Sea" in 1954, is still faintly astonished by his fame. "Here I am, a kind of idol of our British bobby-soxers," he said recently. "I'm 47. And mind you, there hasn't been a vestige of love interest in any of my recent movies — for me, anyway."

Perhaps World War II contributed to this impressive, forceful Hawkins personality. For he served in the British Army for six years in India and the Far East. "A long time," he calls it. Today he is an honorary colonel of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

Before the war Hawkins had been looked on as a good minor actor. Born in London in 1910, he got his first stage job in 1923 through family friends who had heard of a production needing young boys. Subsequently the youth auditioned for George Bernard Shaw, who approved him for the brief role of a page in "Saint Joan."

By the time he was 18, Hawkins was a regular performer in the London theatre. In 1929, he made his American stage debut in the renowned war drama, "Journey's End."

His reliable services were sought out for British movies and plays until World War II interrupted his career. After the war, he went on to his best film part, a detective in "The Fallen Idol." Ralph Richardson was the star, Hawkins only a supporting player.

"The Cruel Sea" changed that. A poll of moviegoers in Great Britain named him the best actor of 1954 for it; Alan Ladd placed second for "Shane." And a *Motion Picture Herald* survey of theatre owners revealed that Hawkins had become the most valuable name at the British boxoffice.

Since then he has been traveling all over the world for increasingly strong assignments — to New Zealand, to Malaya, to Egypt, to the Alps.

Hawkins lives with his wife and three young children in a pleasant suburb of London, sixteen minutes by car from Picadilly.

The children? "Naturally, we consider them rare rollicking specimens," Hawkins said. "They're all right. What are they interested in now? In life itself, the same as their old man."

GEOFFREY HORNE

Producer Sam Spiegel searched in Hollywood, New York and London before he found right in his own backyard the eager, sensitive, shy young commando who accompanies William Holden and Jack Hawkins to the river Kwai. Spiegel was in New York, attending a screening of his own production, "The Strange One." Here, in the small part of a military cadet who is cruelly beaten, Spiegel saw Geoffrey Horne and knew at once he had found his actor. He interviewed the 23-year-old Horne on a Sunday morning in his hotel room; eight days later, Horne was in Ceylon, deep in the waters of the Kwai, planting dynamite at the base of the bridge.

Born in Buenos Aires of American parents—his father was in the oil business at the time—Geoffrey Horne was taken to Cuba at the age of five and received his early education at Havana until he was fourteen, when his parents returned to the U.S.

He finished high school in New York and flunked in most of his subjects. But he was exceptionally good in English literature and his teachers specially commended him for a reading of "Hamlet," he recalls.

This dramatic flair was to prove useful when, having failed to get anywhere in all the other vocational courses at the University of California, he tried his hand in dramatics and graduated, having paid his way through college teaching the mambo—a dance he learned in Cuba.

Horne enrolled at the Academy Theatre, New York, at the age of 20, determined to make the teaching of dramatics his profession.

He studied under Lee Strasberg for a time and got his first job as a result—a small part in a play at the Theatre de Lys, off Broadway, called "High Named Today," which ran for less than two weeks.

This led to a role as Rod Steiger's son in a play for television, a medium which claimed him for the next year and a half.

After "The Bridge on the River Kwai," which brought him a long-term contract with Spiegel, Horne went to France for a major assignment in "Bonjour Tristesse."

ANN SEARS

Ann Sears is the elder daughter of Dr. Gordon Sears, physician superintendent at London's Mile End Hospital, and Mrs. Sears. Ann lives at the hospital with her parents and younger sister, Heather.

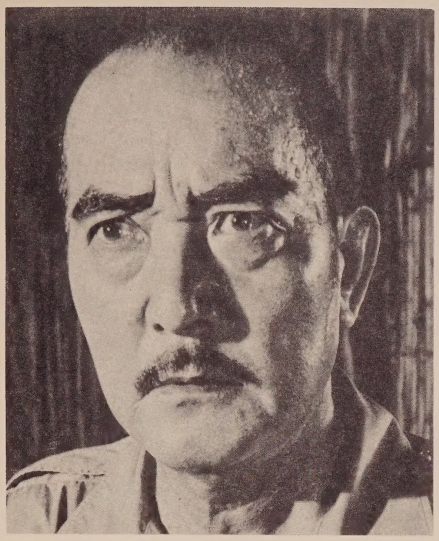
Twenty-one-year-old Heather was selected for the coveted role of Esther Costello, the beautiful blind and deaf Irish orphan girl in Columbia's "The Story of Esther Costello," co-starring Joan Crawford and Rossano Brazzi, one week after Ann had been signed by Sam Spiegel for "The Bridge on the River Kwai."

Almost at exactly the same time, sister Ann was awarded her first film role opposite Dennis O'Keefe in the United Artists release, "Katie." Ann also made her television debut in a BBC-TV series, playing the feminine lead, during this same eventful period of career-launching for the pretty Sears girls.

Ann was born in London (actually at the Mile End Hospital) and was trained at the Central School of Dramatic Art. She has been in the English repertory companies of Canterbury, Dundee, Leatherhead and Nottingham. She played Juliet in the Elizabethan Company tour of England, and has appeared in two radio series.

Before she reached the point in her career to require the services of an agent, she wrote about 1,000 letters in a two year period, outlining her ambitions, her qualifications and her enthusiasm for acting. In many letters she enclosed her photograph. It was because of such a letter that she was signed for her first picture, even though many better known young actresses had been considered for the role.

Ann is five feet five and has a figure that speaks for itself. She has a keen sense of humor, reads everything she can get her hands on and is determined to succeed.



SESSUE HAYAKAWA

Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., came to tea at his house. Wallace Reid waltzed across his parlor floor. William S. Hart left his cowboy clothes at the studio and dressed like a dude for his parties. Charlie Chaplin took off his little tramp attire to look worldly and suave in his home.

These are among the memories Sessue Hayakawa still cherishes of his years in Hollywood — the golden, giddy years of silent movies. Between 1914 and 1926, the Japanese actor enjoyed fabulous fame as a sleek oriental villain, menacing yet enticing. The women who alternately swooned and shuddered at the sight of him, while the cameras ground, included such glamorous stars as Bessie Love, Blanche Sweet, Bessie Bariscale, Fannie Ward and Florence Vidor.

Through films like "The Secret Sin," "The Cheat" and "Each to His Kind," he attained a boxoffice standing equal to that of John Barrymore, Pearl White, Mae Murray and other magic names of that bygone era. His salary ran to $6,000 a week. His Hollywood home, a grey stone castle, cost $200,000.

Thus Hayakawa lived until 1926 when the vogue for his special brand of villainy waned among movie audiences in America. Today, three decades later, he is making a comeback, portraying a key role in support of a newer generation of stars — William Holden, Alec Guinness and Jack Hawkins. Hayakawa is now 68 but still vigorous and young-looking. His hair is black, his carriage erect, his command of jiu-jitsu frightening.

The years between his Hollywood heyday and "The Bridge on the River Kwai" have not left too many marks on Hayakawa's countenance, though there was enough melodrama in them to fill four or five of those thrillers he emoted in the old days.

In January, 1926, Broadway turned a cold shoulder to a lurid drama, "The Love City," in which Hayakawa starred.

Then, in 1931 the actor was invited back to Hollywood for a talkie, "Daughter of the Dragon," with Anna May Wong and Warner Oland. In 1936 he moved to France for a series of films and was caught there by the outbreak of World War II.

With the end of the war, Hayakawa resumed film-making in France, until 1949, when Hollywood summoned him for "Tokyo Joe" with Humphrey Bogart.

Hayakawa was also seen with Claudette Colbert in "Three Came Home" and in "House of Bamboo."

JAMES DONALD

Six feet tall, with blue-gray eyes and a gift of rare dramatic power, James Donald was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, on May 18, 1917, the son of a Church of Scotland minister. Soon after his birth his family moved to Galashiels and later his father was appointed to a church in Montreal.

James started his education at Montreal High School and then, in 1928, after three years there, returned to England to go to a public school in Lancashire. Five years later he rejoined his family and continued his studies at McGill University, Canada.

He left college to join the Brandon Thomas Repertory Company in Glasgow, playing small parts and walk-on's. At the end of three months the company decided to cut down its numbers and Donald was out of a job.

Then, as a last desperate experiment he auditioned before the London Theatre Studio's School of Acting — and won a scholarship.

He studied for two years under Michel St. Denis and was engaged to understudy Michael Redgrave in "Twelfth Night" at the Phoenix Theatre. Redgrave was taken ill suddenly and James had to take over at short notice.

Small parts in many theatrical shows followed, then repertory work at Birmingham, Leicester and Llandudno climaxing, in 1941, when he returned to the Old Vic Company to play in "Thunder Rock" and William Saroyan's "The Time of Your Life."

His efforts to break into films were even more difficult but he finally obtained a bit part in Noel Coward's "In Which We Serve" which David Lean co-directed. Coward liked his work and cast him in "This Happy Breed." Film parts in many other British films followed, including "The Way Ahead."

Playing the assassin opposite Eileen Herlie in "The Eagle Has Two Heads" on West End established Donald among Britain's leading young actors.

His first starring part on the screen came in 1948 with "Broken Journey" (Gainsborough) followed by "The Small Voice" and "Trottie True," all made in England. He won international attention in the M.G.M. film, "Lust for Life," as Van Gogh's brother.

DAVID LEAN

A London newspaperwoman, assigned to do a personality piece on David Lean, came back to her office with this report:

"David Lean, with his coal-black hair, lean face, straight, neat nose and piercing eyes, is a strikingly good-looking fellow. Seen in a crowd or at the studio by a stranger, he is immediately taken for an actor. Five minutes' fruitless attempt to make him talk about himself convinces you, without a shadow of a doubt, that he is not."

"David's only really passionate interest in life," an associate said, "is films. When he's making a film, he's blind and deaf to everything else in the world. He'll sit at lunch and never utter a word. He has no small talk at any time, and is terrifically difficult to get to know."

His furious concentration, his passion for movies have taken Lean from hit to hit almost continuously ever since Noel Coward invited him to serve as co-director on "In Which We Serve" in 1942. Since then there have been honors, prizes and profits for his direction of "Brief Encounter," "Great Expectations," "Breaking Through the Sound Barrier" and "Summertime."

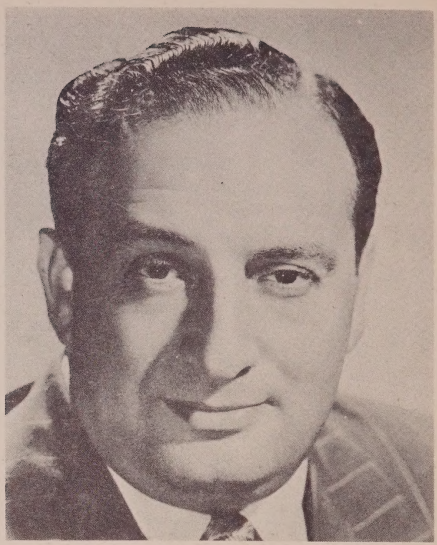
"Summertime" proved that, at least as a director, Lean could show "heart and warmth." He drew from Katharine Hepburn an enormously poignant performance as the American spinster, and a remarkable romantic fervor from Rossano Brazzi as her Italian lover.

The quest for absolute artistic perfection that drives Lean was apparent through every step of the preparation and filming of "The Bridge on the River Kwai." For the year he spent on "The Bridge on the River Kwai," Lean lived at a fever pitch of intensity.

When Lean was at last ready to start shooting the movie, he was not content to do it all in one area of Ceylon. He sometimes traveled 150 miles from home base in search of a glorious shot of a sunset, or 50 miles for just the proper bit of mountain for a 10-second scene.

Producer Sam Spiegel remained tolerant of Lean's perfectionism.

"His mind is absolutely set along one line—films," a friend once said. "I never get tired of seeing movies or making them," is the way Lean puts it.



SAM SPIEGEL

To a reporter who recently asked him where his home is, producer Sam Spiegel replied, "In a valise." During the last decade, Spiegel has probably been in Hollywood less than any producer in the business. To make "The Bridge on the River Kwai," he flew around the world four times, dedicating himself fervently to finding the right actors, the right settings, the right director, the right crew. New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, Bangkok, Colombo are some of the places to which he went on his mission. When he had chosen Ceylon as the ideal place, he and his valise spent over a year commuting between this island at the southernmost tip of India and the rest of the world. Before "The Bridge on the River Kwai," Spiegel made his last three movies in places that were also far from Hollywood — "The African Queen" in Africa, "On the Waterfront" around the port of New York, and "The Strange One" in Florida. There were rewards for such persistent travel: both "The African Queen" and "On the Waterfront" triumphed when the Academy Awards were being given out.

Spiegel's own craving for perfection compels him to go wherever in the world a movie story can best be told, when it can be made to look true. "I think I have coined a ponderous phrase," he says. "It is 'the authority of authenticity.'"

With director David Lean, Spiegel traveled 10,000 miles in search of authentic locales for "The Bridge on the River Kwai." Burma, Malaya, Thailand, Ceylon — these were explored thoroughly for the right place to tell Pierre Boulle's story. "In Malaya we found a very exciting river," Spiegel recalls, "but it flowed in an area of steady guerrilla warfare. Two armored trucks were assigned to protect us while we were there. But one truck was captured by guerrillas and half the men in it were killed."

The bridge took six months to build; at its completion, Spiegel started shooting "The Bridge on the River Kwai."

In 1946 Spiegel produced "The Stranger," in which Orson Welles played a fugitive Nazi bigwig who conceals his identity in a New England town. The high praise and popularity this film attained were particularly gratifying to the Austrian-born Spiegel, who had had to flee from Hitler and the Nazis in the Thirties.

Spiegel has spent most of the last three years on "The Bridge on the River Kwai." He has thoughts now of a home, one in which he can hang the magnificent collection of paintings he has acquired over the years.

The four girls who help William Holden, Jack Hawkins and Geoffrey Horne on their dangerous journey to blow up the bridge on the river Kwai look so much like typical village girls of the jungles of Malaya or Burma that one might imagine they were taken directly from these villages and placed before the cameras. The fact is that three of them are queens of the thriving movie industry of Thailand, on a par with any of the pin-up girls of Hollywood. These three are Ngamta Suphaphongs, Thailand's "Girl With the Most Beautiful Eyes," Javanart Punynchoti, whose name means "Young Lady," and Vilaiwan Seeboonreaung, whose name means "All Beautiful." The fourth girl, 17-year-old Kannikar Dowklee, is the sole newcomer to movies. A peasant girl, she was elected the belle of her Thai village and given a trip to Bangkok as a reward. There a magazine took her picture, which led to a movie contract. But producer Sam Spiegel came to Bangkok looking for actresses for "The Bridge on the River Kwai" and signed her before she could make her first Thai movie, besides signing the three already established actresses.

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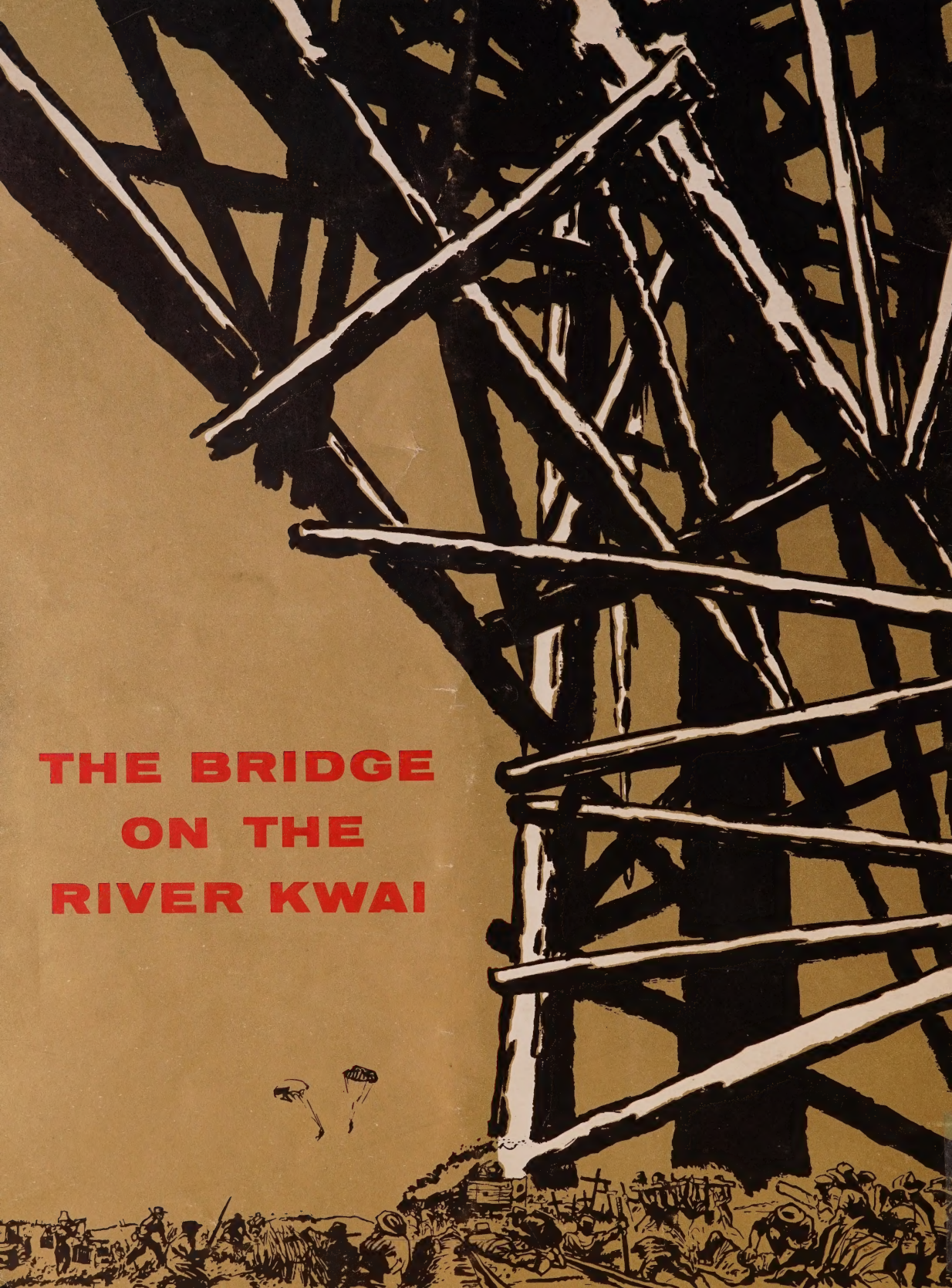
THE BRIDGE
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